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A RAILWAY TRIP

TO THE

SUNNY SOUTH

FROM NOTES BY A

RAILROAD CONDUCTOR

DECEMBER 1881.

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ÉGER BROUSSEAU'S PRINTING ESTABLISHMENT
9, Buade Street

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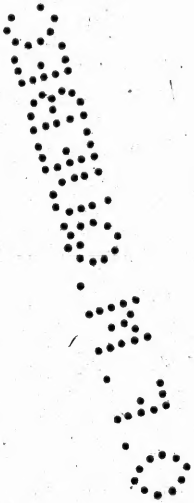

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A RAILWAY TRIP

TO THE

SUNNY SOUTH

The Annual Convention of the Old Reliable Conductors Life Insurance Association of the United States and Canada being held in New Orleans, La., on the 7th December, 1881, some of the boys from Canada decided upon taking in the trip, and assist at this meeting; so, with that object in view, and as the distance is some 2,250 miles, from our terminus

we decided upon leaving on Thursday December 1st. Therefore, upon comparing notes, as to preparation, the previous day, we discovered an important matter in abeyance; so with all due haste, we deputed one of our number, the celebrated Conductor Armstrong, of I. C. R. fame, as a whole Committee of one, to precede us to Montreal to facilitate arrangements. The remainder of us waited as patiently as railroad men can wait the coming of the morning of December 1st which broke over us, dull and gloomy, with overhanging rain clouds, causing us no little annoyance I can assure you, kind reader, but later, when the rain commenced to pour in torrents, our spirits sank, like melted sugar, to the bottom of the cup: however, being in readiness and filled with that glow of excitement possessed by all travellers to a greater or lesser extent, we cast off all feelings akin to disappointment, and mustered accordingly at about 9.00 A. M. Conductor Frank

Derouin, I. C. R., accompanied by his most graceful and affable lady. called at my residence on their way to the depot of the Quebec, Montreal, Ottawa and Occidental Railway, there to meet Conductor Ed. Reynolds of this road. Having arrived a few minutes before the departure of the train we were soon surrounded by a host of friends and well-wishers, who had assembled to see us off, and wish us "God speed" on our journey, to the land of sugar cane and cotton, dark damsels and gallant gentlemen. A number of old time railroad men were at the station also, and amongst them the ever popular "broth of a boy" Conductor Ed. Crean of the G. T. R., who parted from us with real sorrow, on account of himself not being able to make one of our party. I may also be allowed to particularly mention Lew Farmer, the American Consul at Point Levi, Jas McKenna, Ticket Agent, G. T. R., L. Marquette, C. Dubé, M. Bolger, the Editor "Quotidien" Newspaper, J. Derouin,

&c., together with a fair sprinkling of our friends of the gentler sex,—the darling creatures, they could not miss forming part of the group,—so when the train pulled out of the station at 10.10 A. M., our spirits, a short while previous so downcast, were now raised to the highest at the noble send-off we received from our kind and dear friends. How grand the sight to us, as the train pulled slowly out of the station, with the many hats and handkerchiefs waving a fond farewell, till the curve was rounded, and we found ourselves fairly started for the glorious south, on our way to New Orleans, La.

The train is in charge of Conductor Reynolds, Quebec, Montreal, Ottawa and Occidental, who made the time pass pleasantly: indeed, with us, being a very intimate acquaintance of ours, we cannot give him any "taffy;" sufficient to say, that he knows his business, and how to treat his passengers. This Road is run by the Provincial Government and is in

excellent order, having been re-ballasted this past year, with clean and neat coaches, and running upon a fast schedule of time, making a trip over it very enjoyable. We were located in the luxurious Day Parlor coach, in charge of Mr. St Louis, who, like all the employées on this road, are genial and friendly boys, and well liked by the travelling public. The usual railroad chat was indulged in and nothing of particular interest transpired worth recording until dinner was announced.

Three Rivers.—Twenty minutes for dinner.

This is a flourishing little town, on the banks of the St Lawrence River, about 70 miles from Quebec, and does a thriving trade, being the outlet of the famous St Maurice River, and lumbering country, inhabited principally by French-Canadians, and has both water and rail communication, Several large mills and lumbering concerns are established here, and

surrounded by a pretty fair agricultural country. From here, we have Berthier, St Vincent de Paul, Terrebonne, &c., all prosperous little places, along the route of the Railway and as the train rolls pleasantly along, we enjoy the beautiful landscape scenery presented to us, and the time passes so quickly, that we find ourselves on the outskirts of the city of Montreal, almost unperceived.

Montreal.—The commercial metropolis of Canada, was reached at 4.45 P. M., and loathe indeed were we, to bid Adieu, to the many pleasant acquaintances we had formed during the first day of our journey; we take a carriage and hurry through the streets of this glorious city, which, I must say, contains a large complement of glorious people, and arrive at the "Albion Hotel" that haven of rest and comfort to all travellers, and whose hosts, for the kind manner in which they treat all Railroad men, are both loved and

admired. Here we were reinforced by the addition of our Committee man A. Armstrong, he having been in town all day, arranging and putting things all right in the city, not forgetting a special visit to Joe Beef's Canteen, to inspect the condition of the bears and other things, and naturally he felt somewhat fatigued, but upon seeing us, he forgot his fatigue, and joined us to further complete our little preliminaries. Having no time to lose, we interviewed the gentlemanly managers of the Pullman Company who provided us with passes to Chicago. Our next move was an interview with D. Pottinger the General Superintendent of the I. C. R., who had procured our railroad passes. This attended to, all was in readiness, and nothing remained undone, but our friend, Armstrong, again was heard from, and made a proposition duly seconded, to adjourn to the large and commodious dining room of the "Albion" and attend to personal matters, which was una-

nimously carried, all very willing to take part, in this proceeding. Supper over, we wandered off to the Bonaventure Station, to take the 10.00 P. M., Grand Trunk Railway for Chicago; here we again received a send-off from our Montreal friends and brothers in arms, who were on hand in strong numbers :—amongst them we noticed, J. Robinson, W. Brewster, J. M. Govern, I. King, J. Darcy, and the worthy Vice-President of the Association, Frank Goulette, who, owing to sickness in his family, has been deprived of his annual visit to his American friends, for which he was very sorry. He wished us to particularly remember him to all the boys, including Uncle Joe and Brother Titus. At 10.00 P. M., sharp, the train moved out of the station amidst the cheers of our friends, which were repeated again and again, until distance separated us and we were once more left to our own disposition; upon calling the muster roll, we found our party

consisted of the following, viz : C. Murray, Ed. Reynolds, Quebec, Montreal, Ottawa and Occidental, A. Armstrong, F. Derouin and Eugene McKenna of the Intercolonial Railway, a pretty hard crowd, but all quiet and orderly. We were provided with places and comfortable berths in the Pullman Car " Kingston " which was in charge of that very amiable and gentlemanly Conductor McClintock, who welcomed us kindly ; as the car was pretty well filled with passengers we enjoyed a social chat amongst ourselves, and indulged in story telling, until fatigue began to creep over us, when we retired to snatch a few hours of grateful repose, and enjoy the first night of our journey.

Friday, 2nd December : Awaked by daylight, and shortly afterwards adjourned to breakfast in the splendid Grand Trunk Railway Dining Car, attached to the train, where we were provided with a good substantial meal which we enjoyed ; at the rate

of 35 miles an hour, the boys all feeling in good spirits this morning, the "Doctor" Armstrong unusually so (How our friend received the appellation of "Doc," I will lose five minutes to here explain.) Being about 5 feet 6 in stature, and inclined to be particularly robust, turning the scales at 220 lbs. and of a friendly, genial disposition, capable of making acquaintances at short notice, and a natural knack of retaining friends, the boys on the road took the liberty of naming him the "Doctor," which term has stuck to him, and by which I intend to make him known all through our trip; this formed our after breakfast chat. By this time the train had reached the beautiful town of

Port Hope--which is approached, in a remarkable manner, over a curved iron bridge, quite long, under which run the Port Hope and Lindsay, and the Peterboro Railways; it is also the centre of a rich agricultural

country, and has numerous mills and factories. Oshawa, Bowmanville, and many other places are well worthy of mention, but our attractions are further on; to grander sights and scenery rare, we fly past, in panoramic style. As the train rolls along at a rapid speed, many beautiful western homesteads, having a comfortable appearance, denote wealth and prosperity. Nothing turning up to cause surprise or wonderment, we look around and scan the faces of our fellow passengers, with the hopes perhaps of dropping upon something, and are rewarded, as the Doctor has for some time been on the move, and now we discover him in high conversation with a pleasant looking gentleman, having highly colored hair and complexion denoting one of those jolly good fellows; we lost no time in drawing up and of course forming an acquaintance. After a little while we found out we had struck a queer fish in our friend, who was no less a personage than a

police officer from Chicago. He had the usual stock of anecdotes, was well provided with a quantity of Old Rye, and naturally made an agreable addition to our party; we took the liberty, in a quiet way, to christen our friend "Windy." We had many pleasant sallies with him and at his expense, and he frequently promised us lots of fun, when we got to Chicago.

Toronto.—This is the great city of Western Canada. We reach here at 11.30 A. M., and with pleasure we hear that the train stops 45 minutes; so, taking time by the forelock, we jump off on arrival, and hurry up town, visiting the "Queen's" and "Rossin," taking a short run up King Street, merely to have it to say we visited Toronto. Not wishing to get left, we return to the station, and once more embark, on our route, quite well pleased with the delay made here. I forgot to mention that the gentlemanly manipulator of the

punch, who had charge of the train from Montreal to Kingston, was named John Gee, a veteran bell cord puller and a bully old boy, and he was succeeded by Joe Chambers to Toronto, none the less bully, although much younger; we were treated by both of them, very nicely indeed, notwithstanding the fact that they had their hands full, in the shape of heavy trains. Joe expressed a wish that he was of the party, which would have pleased us very much, as we learned that the Western Division of the Grand Trunk Railway was not to be represented at the Convention. From Toronto, we were put under the care of Conductor Hoskins, a very affable and most polite man, who piloted us to Stratford, 125 miles, without either accident or incident, between Toronto and Stratford, a rich agricultural country, studded with elegant farmers' residences, a great many of them being built of brick and stone, having large commodious outhouses and stables adjoining,

denoting prosperity. The snow that we have been accustomed to see over the fields, has now all disappeared, and the country, apparently, has put on another coat; instead of the snow-clad hills and ice-bound lakes and rivers, we find ourselves, such a short distance west, amongst ploughed fields and pastures green, with the lakes and rivers still open and following their natural course, as if Jack Frost never visited those parts: the stations, too, differ somewhat from our own, from the fact that large towns surround them, with their mills, factories, grain elevators, brick yards &c., &c., each industry employing numerous hands, causing a continual stir and commotion nowhere seen along our line.

Stratford.—One of the many flourishing towns, on our way, is reached about 4 P. M. and can boast of two railroads entering it. Quite a lot of business is transacted at this place, being inhabited by an enterprising

class of people; here we met Passenger Agent Sheehey of the Wabash, on his way east to Quebec. We gave him an account of our progress so far, and wished to be reported. A slight delay of five minutes for lunch and off again, in charge of Conductor Frank Dailey, who runs from Stratford to Detroit, a double journey of 284 miles: the train runs fast through a very interesting country, and the conductor is a daisy who gives us a pleasant time. We had a specimen of the country people get on the train here; a hardy lot of big lankey half American chaps, with plenty of backbone and muscle; a good stock for a new country. We had quite a chat with some of them and enjoyed ourselves immensely. Since leaving home everything has gone smoothly with us, nothing having transpired to mar the harmony of our crowd. We were well received by every one we came in contact with, all having the same wish for us, namely a pleasant trip.

Sarnia.—The jumping off point for all Canadian travel going to the western portion of Uncle Sam's vast dominions, we reach here, in good time for supper, this being the last meal, for a time, we are to have on Canadian soil. We adjourn to the extensive dining room in the station, and are furnished with an excellent meal, to which we do ample justice. We are waited upon by a number of handsome lady waiters; they understand their business so well and go about serving you so kindly, that our party as a whole are quite captivated, the Doctor, especially one blue eyed, blonde damsel completely carrying him off, he admitted being happier at this table than at any he had sat at since leaving home. After supper, Doctor and myself sauntered out to view surroundings, and get a glimpse of the last town in Canada. Whilst doing so, unperceived by us, our train with baggage, companions and all moved from the station, and behold, we find two passengers on board left

behind. Imagine our grief and disappointment. We severely rated the poor forlorn station policeman and Telegraph operator and gave vent to our feelings in a very forcible manner. Being strangers, of course, we were unacquainted with the lay out of the place, but were informed by the policeman, we could procure a ferry in time to reach our train on the other shore. Much, I must say, to our delight, however, the Doc. still felt somewhat uneasy, and could hardly credit the Policeman's word, lamenting his losses did he not catch up with the train. I endeavoured to console him, as best I could, telling him that the boys would take good care of his carpet sack and empty collar box. Notwithstanding all this, when we got on the deck of the tidy little craft used as a ferry, he got so fidgetty thinking, perhaps, still of his wealth, for the present lost, that I had great difficulty in preventing him from committing that most grievous sin of suicide. The boat was a fast one

and headed us quickly on the opposite shore, much to the Doctor's joy; although, still, he was not sure, and many were the questions he put to each individual he met carrying a lantern. At last we reached the station platform Port Huron, to find the train not yet arrived. Both of us breathed more freely, and we found our way to the landing to watch the progress of disembarking the cars from the large and powerful steamboat, used here for ferrying trains across the Detroit river. We are surprised, at seeing a large steamer loaded with freight and passenger cars, puffing and steaming up toward a kind of slip, which is lowered on her entering the dock, by means of hand winches, until it is brought even with the dock; this dock is formed by spring sides, piles driven into the bottom, and as the steamer comes in, these sides spring as she gives, thereby causing no jar on board. She slides along this until the slip is reached where an engine awaits, pulling the cars off

without any apparent trouble or difficulty; every man to his post and no confusion. We were told that the Grand Trunk Railway owned and run three of those boats in connection with their trains.

Port Hope.—Safely arrived on American soil, we meet our friends and are congratulated on our luck. They were beginning to feel very uneasy at our misfortune, but were well repaid by the laugh they had at our expense, the Doctor took it all, but he tried hard to get out of it. We were obliged to wait forty minutes on Buffalo connection; so, after an interview with the polite although strict American Customs officer, we visited a very particular friend of mine, Mr W. Kelly, Ticket Agent, who received us very graciously; next we started out to take in the town. We did a little of it, but our stay being limited we could not go very far. It seemed a smart little town, and we were pleased with the portion we did

see. Here we parted from our kind friend, conductor Dailey, who had treated us so well, during his run. He branched off to Detroit over the Michigan Central, and our route is by the Chicago and Grand Trunk to Chicago; connection arrived, baggage examined, train made up and all ready, we embark once more; shortly the train moves out forty minutes late, in charge of conductor Peter Holmes, a pleasant companion, and an old experienced railroad man, having been at it since 1862. We feel safe in his charge, and the train rolls pleasantly along, occasionally striking a rough piece of track, which had a peculiar feel to us, accustomed to the smooth steel track. However we take it all in and enjoy it, for what is life we think if it has not its rough and smooth sides; our only hope being that a run off would not occur at this stage of our journey to mar our pleasure.

Flint.—A large town and the junction to Saginaw and Bay City by the Flint and Père Marquette Railway, apparently a very enterprising place, the station being lit with gas-jets, instead of the old familiar coal oil lamps; it presented quite a nice sight to us. The delay here was short, and our inspection limited. Leaving the station, we again strike a piece of delightful old iron, and the boys retire, leaving me alone. Left to myself, my mind wanders off to home thoughts and kind friends, but am awakened from my reverie by the brakesman calling out the next station, Buran, and as the hour is advanced, I determine upon retiring also; so bidding our conductor good night, kindly, I slip off to the precincts of the Pullman car, to sleep the sleep of the just and dream of the morrow.

Saturday, December 8, Maysboro.—The beautiful tenor voice of the Pullman porter, informs us of the approach to next meal station, and

we awake feeling refreshed and glorious, the Doctor being the first to show up, wishing to activate a little to make an appearance in Chicago. Next came Frank Derwin and myself, and shortly after Sid. Reynolds and Charley Murray, heave along; the customary "How goes it this morning," and the usual joke is cracked amongst us, all in good spirits, so after spreeing up a bit, we patiently await the arrival at the refreshment station.

Valparaiso. — The train stopped twenty minutes for breakfast; here we retired to a smart brick house, in rear of the station, and were provided with a good meal, served in the prairie style. Our appetites being good, the time passed rather quickly for some of our party and were it not for a little forethought, a repetition of Garnia would have taken place sure, as the last, "all aboard" had been given and the train almost started. From here to Chicago, 62 miles, our party assemble in the smoking car, and

anxiously await the approach to the great railway centre, and with wondering eyes take in the vast network of tracks which cross and recross one another. As we near the city the closer we approach, the greater our surprise, as for miles around us, we perceive smoke issuing from the iron horses, as they plod on their weary way, through this labyrinth of rail tracks; wondering how they all can receive sufficient patronage to make the undertaking a profitable speculation, or whence can they all be going: but wonderful is the power of engineering skill coupled with the perseverance, courage and natural genius of the American people, nothing is impossible with them, which we poor handful of Canadian travellers believe although only approaching the American borders.

Chicago.—At 10.00 A. M. we reach the 12th street Depot, the train being one hour thirty minutes late, all our party (including Windy and the Doc-

tor who have become great friends), feeling in good spirits having spent a comfortable night. We are met at the station by the Montreal deputation which had arrived a day previously, composed of Geo. Robinson, Johnny Mulligan and John Davey, and were welcomed to Chicago. We here parted with our kind host conductor McClintock, who treated us right royally whilst under his charge; words cannot express our praises of him. We next took possession of the omnibus awaiting us and to the Mattison House, on Wabash avenue, excellent accommodation and everything first class; after necessary performances after a lengthened journey viz: the providing of comforts exteriorily, and finding a little more space to display our graceful forms; as instead of the close precincts of a railway train we find the vast and most magnificent City of the West spread before us to roam over in whatever direction our fancy dictated. East, west, north and south lie attractions innumerable,

especially to our little band of newly arrived emigrants. All assembled we start out to take in the sights of Chicago, the great railroad centre of the fertile wheat growing country of the West, situated on the shores of Lake Michigan, with the Chicago River, wending its weary way through the City (weary indeed I should say) from the number of ships of all descriptions to be found on its waters, dark and muddy; pity the unlucky wanderer, who has the misfortune to fall into its depths, as from its color and appearance life would be but of short duration. Innumerable bridges span it; at street crossings and in several places tunnels are built under it, to provide accomodation for the vast amount of traffic in this quarter. After spending considerable time viewing the City Hall, Post Office, Court House, and many of the Railroad Depots, our next attractions were the Hotels, too numerous to particularize. There are the Grand Pacific on Clark Street and

the Palmer on State Street, real palaces in their style and magnificence of interior arrangement, marble fronttings and velvet pile carpetings, with plush upholstering and furniture of the finest black walnut, making altogether a real fairy scene, when compared with some of our own first class houses; there are also the Sherman, Commercial, Mattison, Walker and 1000 others all grand houses, and most comfortable, although not altogether coming up to the style or grandeur of the two first named. We wandered about, taking in all these grand sights and meeting at every step, something new to attract our eyes. The people we met with at nearly all those places named, seemed well to do and prosperous, and we wonder to ourselves how can all this luxury be supported, but then we recollect we are across the line 45 where brains, genius and wealth from the known world associate with each other, and what brains and genius lack, wealth carries through, there

by making the country, where this manner of proceeding is adopted, a happy and prosperous one, as shown at every step, not only in the style of the people, but in the surrounding factories, shops and large enterprises of various description everywhere met with. We wander aimlessly about, having no particular place to go, till at last, we are brought up by the thought that the train south leaves at 3.30 P. M. After satisfying the inner man with a good substantial supper at the Mattison, we meander off to the Depot of the Illinois Central Railway to find all sleeping accommodation engaged and your humble servants out in the cold. This state of things did not exactly suit our party especially the Doctor, who likes comfort; so he proposed that we remain over one night; it was put to the vote and unanimously carried; we then return to the nearest respectable house, which is the Commercial Hotel, Lake and Dearborn Streets, where we duly register and are supplied with

comfortable quarters. Not being satisfied with our rambles of the day, we once more find ourselves wandering through the now densely crowded streets, occasionally dropping in here and there to a variety hall or grand saloon, until at last we wind up contented in a measure, at John Lang's Variety Hall, State Street. Here we enjoyed an hour's good fun listening to the jokes of the Irish and Dutch Comedian. We also witnessed some high kickers and some good jugglers, altogether making a pretty fair show. Considering we were cut off from the legitimate by the late hour we returned from the station, we were all personally made acquainted with the proprietor, and drank his health before leaving; all along State Street those variety Halls are numerous, good, bad and very indifferent. We found ourselves in a few rough ones, and rough they were but we were out expressly to see what we could see for ourselves the truth of the many wild stories we

had heard of western life. I must say we were not much disappointed. Notwithstanding the many sights and funny things taking place, everywhere we rambled nature bade us, return to more comfortable and quiet quarters and enjoy that repose so gratifying to the tired wanderer; therefore, like good children of mother nature, we obeyed the command and midnight found us quite unconscious of surroundings; some dreaming of the many grand imposing sights still in store for us. We awake Sunday morning, the fourth day from home at 8.00 A. M., feeling refreshed and invigorated, the sights we had seen so far having raised our spirits, we prepared ourselves for a good long stroll. This day, the Doctor feeling in extra good humour, having been on hand earlier than the rest of the party, he had an interview with several people, amongst them the clerk (I mean the clerk of the weather) so that we might have a fine day for our rambles. In this respect he was suc-

cessful, as after the usual "good morning" and "how do you feel boys?" passed round, the weather was discussed; next, how to spend the day? but the first thing on my programme was the securing of accommodation for the night, which I at once proceeded to do; this done I was free till 8.00 P. M. We found, upon going out, that the observance of Sunday was not the strictest in this city: wares of all descriptions were exposed for sale, and the ever present newsboys, were doing a rushing business. *Sunday Times only a cent.* The streets lacked the everyday appearance merely in the number of people rushing about being less, although the streets were thronged; but many presented a Sunday look, clean shave &c, &c, proving at once the holiness of the day. We strolled around, taking in the many sights we had missed the previous day and of course a source of new pleasure to us. In the afternoon, we took in the Olympic theatre and witnessed the representation of "Evan-

geline," a comic opera with Joe Turner in the cast of the lone Fisherman who fairly paralyzed us, his acting being very good. In the theatre we met with an old railway boy, Alex. Gosselin, son of A. Gosselin, Hadlow, working on the Rock Island Road. You can imagine our surprise and I must admit joy at meeting one from home. He was also delighted at seeing us, and many were the questions put and answered. He is running an engine for this company and doing well. Upon coming out of the theatre, the fire alarm was sounding for a fire on State street, to which we immediately repaired; a good opportunity being offered us of seeing the working of Chicago's superior Fire Brigade. The scene of the fire being about four blocks off we were soon on the spot, but much earlier were the fire engines, as we found four of them at work with hose stretched and throwing immense streams of water on the fire, which was working sad havoc in a large five story stone building, occupied as a

dry goods store. Scarcely ten minutes elapsed until two more engines were at work and still another and another, making in all eight engines. As the fire seemed to be gaining headway and in a fair way to communicate to adjoining premises, but owing to the indefatigable exertions of the brigade and the order and system carried out they succeeded in a short while in confining the fire to the house in which it commenced. The admirable system, no noise, no confusion, every man to his post style of the firemen pleased us greatly. The fire over, we sauntered off to enjoy the evening meal and make further preparation for our journey. Since our advent to this grand city we have been surrounded by a number of our friends from Quebec viz Thos. Corrigan, Thos. Mulrooney, B. Jennings John Jennings, Alex Gosselin and the attentive brother of our very particular friend Ned. Crean, called Tim, who never lacked in his attentions to our party, as without him, we

could not possibly have taken in one half of the sights of this famous city. At 8.30 P.M. we proceeded in a body, accompanied by a number of old friends, to the depot, where we took the Illinois Central train for Cairo, connecting with the Great Jackson Route for New-Orleans. We were provided with Pullman accommodation this time, and were shewn our respective berths in the good sleeper "Mississippi" in charge of conductor Guiteau. The last ".Good bye" is given, and the train rolls slowly out of the station, through innumerable tracks and sidings, stopping frequently at the many suburban resorts to allow Chicago's grand ladies and gentlemen to return to their palatial country homes. Speed increases as we get out, until about thirty miles an hour is attained. We amuse ourselves reciting stories of what transpired during our stay in Chicago, and recounting our various personal adventures. The Doctor, coming in here, and giving

us a short sketch of what he had seen and done, and I can assure you it amused us no little, as he had funny things to tell about how he left his Police Officer after sampling the famous Rock and Rye several times, 10 P. M. the train is travelling pretty lively over the great Illinois prairie, with nothing much to interest. We adjourn to our separate locations for the night, Frank Deroun and myself in one section, Ned Reynolds and C. Murray in another, while Mulligan and the irrepressible Doctor occupy separate sections, much to the disappointment of a newly married couple, who anticipated the boys doubling up. But you know, the Doctor was two days in Chicago, and there was a great deal of excitement there. However, every one is happy and presently silence reigns supreme and sleep, that great health restorer, takes possession of all the occupants of car "Mississippi." We are awakened at 6.30 A. M., Monday 5th, at Centralia, 252 miles from Chicago.

We are a little disappointed to find Cincinnati connection on M. and O. two hours late, on which we have to wait. This place is also the connection to Sioux City on Illinois Central. Having plenty of time, we breakfast without hurry, and then visit the workshops and Round House. Conductor Claudius brought us from Chicago. Here, where he leaves us, this being the end of the run; while in his charge he did all he could for our comfort. The M. and O. train having arrived, we couple up, and the welcome "all aboard" shouted we are off once more, en route to the sunny, sunny south, to enjoy the graceful smiles of the southern damsels, and the pleasant company of the boys of Dixie whom, we hope, will accept us as we are, "poor forlorn Canucks" frozen out for seven long months of winter whilst our friends are basking in delightful sunshine. We strike many places of interest along this end of the road, amongst them Du Quoin, a nice little place of

about 2,500 people, situated in a rich farming country; every farmer having his peach and apple orchard with acres of strawberries. I am told the trade in fruit is quite extensive around here. The monotony of the prairie scenery is here relieved by an occasional mountain view, with woods and forests of oak, elm, and hickory. The farm houses are not very grand or prepossessing in appearance, but mostly small wooden structures, anything but attractive to the passing traveller. The hills are high, amongst the highest is one called "Bald knob" the highest point on the Illinois Central; not quite as high as some of our Canadian hills, but still quite high enough. We fell in with a very pleasant land agent named J. W. Turlay, who gave us some very interesting details about the country and the people who inhabit it. The people of this district from Centralia to Cairo are principally descendants of the old white southern settlers who peopled this district before the war, or during

its progress, and are mostly all well to do people but a lazy indigenous class. There are several flourishing places on the line, viz Ashly, St Johns, Du Quoin, Carbondale, Anna, Pulaski; and next in order is Cairo, where we cross the Ohio River on boat. Arrived here at about 11 A. M. we are obliged to await the ferry, owing to an accident having occurred on the Kentucky shore, by some cars of coal escaping and running down the slope or embankment, through the boat and dropping into the river, causing a delay of some five hours to our party, who, you may imagine, were not asleep. Before the train had properly come to a stand, our fellows were off, interviewing everybody. Here, for the first time, we had the opportunity of meeting with Dinah at home the real negress, pure and unadulterated, and we took advantage and tried all means of getting up a confab, but no use, "dey don't like de dirty white trash." We also discover that amongst our fellow travellers on the train, are

three brother Conductors, and their families from Boston, on the way to the Convention. We lose no time in getting acquainted, and try to make the time pass a little agreeably. After waiting about one hour and a half on the bank of the river, at the incline we are pushed up to the Halliday House where we are supplied with a first class meal, and on the way, have a good view of the city, which seemed to be a prosperous place, doing quite a large business. We return to the incline, to patiently await coming events. We are soon rewarded by some impatient passenger calling out "here she comes;" much to our satisfaction. Most welcome news of all almost, the call for meal slightly ahead, especially in this part of the world. True enough, in comes the large double track steamboat H. S. McComb, with two double action engines, when she is soon made fast; and down we descend the incline (as they call it) on to the boat, three cars on each track. Everything made safe,

we glide across the lovely muddy waters of the Ohio, to the old Kentucky shore on the opposite side, which we reach in safety. A pilot engine meets us and drags the train up the incline, where it is made up for the road after necessary precautions, viz: chaining up draw-bars, &c, &c. No. 75 engine St-Louis-build, a good specimen of a locomotive is attached, when orders are received to sidetrack and await No. 3 to pass. At last having a clear track, we are off again for a 550 miles journey. Jefferson Fort, first station from Cairo. After passing here, we strike a very rough piece of track but nothing to disturb these passengers. During our delay at Centralia and Cairo not a word was uttered. We seemed to have settled down to the inevitable, and take things as they come. At Cairo, we change conductors and here fall in with a gentleman who runs us to Jackson, Tenn, 107 miles.

Turner,—Here is the state line between Kentucky and Tennessee, part of the town lying in each state, a flourishing place of about 3,000 people, a great lumbering country, with large trade in oak staves, walnut, hickory and poplar. The country is very sparsely settled between stations, but shows up pretty well, close to stations.

Milan.—For supper: I should cease to smile if this is not a supper; well I am at a loss to describe it. In the first place, we were waited upon by a buxom lassie of very high color, gay and sprightly in her movements, with a pleasant and very enticing smile, but not sufficient to appease the rational cravings of a hungry man. Next she placed before each one a dish of steak done to the veins of nicety, but, unfortunately the steer from which this steak had been taken must have been killed when its usefulness was all gone, and his loss, as a beast of burden, would never be missed. I then tried what the sweet

little waiter called chicken, but alas, no matter, how I hacked and tore, it was utterly *utter* impossible, to extract the meat from the poor young chicken's bones. Well, I do not like to speak harshly of anything, but, from opinions, most freely expressed on all sides. "Milan you are a daisy dining station." However, we were rewarded upon coming out to find our friend the Doctor (who had more sense than the rest of us, by not trying this meal) engaged in having a real juvenile Minstrel Troupe at work on station platform, hoeing it down and singing in real old plantation style, which we enjoyed for a few minutes, but as the train moved on, we were obliged to postpone our amusement in a hurry and leave Milan—good supper, good singing, good niggers and all.

Jackson, Tenn.—This is a considerable place, boasting 10,000 people, and apparently an extra enterprising place. All kinds of industries are esta-

blished here, they have a large Gas House, also an Ice Mill, where they make artificial ice, and can supply it at 25 cts per 100 lbs. The making seems simple indeed, being merely of salt brine, in which are placed cans of water surrounded by pipes containing ammonia, and acids, which congeal the brine and water in the cans. They do a large trade, supplying all the lines to Cairo and south. There is also a very large mill here, for the extraction of oil from cotton seed. This business is very extensive; they purchase the seed from the planters, and derive great profit from the refuse cotton (they take from this seed,) which they sell to paper manufacturers—almost paying the original cost of the seed: they then extract the oil, which they purify and refine, and it is used to a great extent in place of butter and lard. This industry alone constitutes a great source of the prosperity of this town. There are also many large saw mills, with two large machine shops, making in

all one of the most interesting places we have passed through as yet. The particulars respecting that town, were furnished us by Conductor Spragin, a very polite and most genial companion, who had us in charge to this point and where we parted, with no small feelings of regret. I can assure you, he will be long remembered by each and every one of our party for the very kind manner in which he treated us.

After leaving Jackson, our Boston Brothers of the Punch and fellow companions, having become thoroughly acquainted with us Canucks we spend some time cracking jokes, and conversing, until night coming on, the conversation flags, and I find the boys commencing to drop off, gradually, until at last, I am alone of the crowd, book in hand, deeply interested in my sketch, surrounded by a motley crowd of all colors and I suppose nationalities, as they all seem quiet and not disposed to quarrel. I smoke away quite contentedly thin-

king of my many kind friends in dear old Quebec, from which, I am going further and further every hour; and wondering if their thoughts ever revert to the wandering refugee as I now must call myself, having arrived in Tennessee or the land of refugees, since leaving Cairo the colored population predominate, and are met with in numbers. We have them in all shapes and forms, from the "Dear old Grandpa," crippled and grey, to the sweet little colored baby, in the arms of buxom good natured Dinah, also the fairer and much envied creole beauty from Louisiana State, rich and poor, of all classes and all conditions.

Grand Junction Station, the jumping off place between Tennessee and Mississippi States; as the sma' hours of the morning are creeping on me, I determine after looking around this station and grounds, as it is the junction of the Mobile and Chattanooga Railroad, to postpone my sketch and retire. I am rewarded to some extent

by getting a sight of a host of prize dogs brought to this place to attend the yearly dog show of Tennessee; five minutes delay and off again, and now to quietly join my friends, already snugly tucked away in their separate apartments or berths; fearful of disturbing any of them I proceed with caution and dispatch, and before long am lost in that slumber so welcome to poor fatigued nature. This morning, I must say a word in favor of the American Ladies, whom, we must call part of our party, being railroad men's wives and families and as all men and women of this calling must naturally have some feelings for one another, knowing as they do the many difficulties their dear husbands and sons have to pull through, over frieght trains of all descriptions, before reaching that goal, which all beginners aim to reach viz: a passenger train, and increased wages; well, those ladies, forming our compagnons de voyage (excuse French expression) are very jolly indeed, and

manage to pass the time in various ways, card playing and story telling, whilst some are industriously knitting and sewing. But the aim of all is pleasure; however we overhear the remark, "I wonder how are they all at home?" shewing that, like ourselves, their minds occasionally turn backward to old home friends and familiar faces, notwithstanding their strange and fascinating surroundings, as almost every station we stop at presents some new feature to us northern and eastern people.

We are politely called to breakfast at 7 A. M. Jackson, Mississippi. Tuesday 6th we alight to find the weather all that we could wish for; in fact since leaving home, the clerk of the weather has favored us, and this morning proves no exception in all the glory of a hot summer's morning. We breakfast at the Edwards House, close to the station; and unlike Milan, we partake of a very nice meal, and are politely waited on by a host of colored waiters. This operation gone through,

we retire out doors to enjoy a yawn and bask in the rays of Old Sol, which is just delightful. The train being soon got ready, we embark, and once more are off through the glorious cotton and corn fields winding through luxuriant palm and oak groves of immense extent. The cotton is almost all pulled, but here and there we catch a glimpse of the pickers at work. Wonderful large bales are piled up at all stations waiting shipment. The heat of the sun is something awful and we ask one another if this is not June instead of December. Mules are the principal beasts of burden all along the route; horses are rare things down this way. We have just passed one ox team. At Hazelhurst, we saw a three mule team, with the driver on the nigh mule: the leader being stubborn, he was obliged to lash him with a long thick whip, and withal it required considerable exertion to make him move. At all the stations we see small one story houses and stores, not very imposing or grand,

at some places quite numerous. Four and six ox and mule teams are common.

Osyka.—The boundary between Mississippi and Louisiana is a small place, but it contains some wild inhabitants, a fair specimen of whom got on the train. We were enjoying a smoke in a second class car, when those boys got on board. They were full of the old Mississippi firewater, and wanted to tell who they were; they were the wildest looking lads we ever cared to see; they commenced howling, singing and dancing, much to our amusement for a while, until their attention was directed to a young colored man, whom they wanted to shoot:—that was the fun! The boy was seriously frightened, when the Remington gun was produced and deliberately loaded with 16 rounds. At this point your friends, not wishing to further test the shooting qualities of the Osyka folks, quietly withdrew to safer quarters. We discovered

that the boy's life was spared but they fired at a *coon* as they called them. In the fields, we are passing through a thickly wooded country, interspersed here and there with small cleared spots with its real *Old log Cabin*; Topsy, Dinah and Old Uncle Jake, basking in the sunshine on the door steps. For the most part those are miserable hovels or sheds, and the people we see issuing have something of the savage in them from their wild actions; no wonder, situated as they are in the midst of the forest. The foliage is all beautiful and green, and we see an occesional songster, which serves to break the monotony. Splendid groves of pine and oak are passed through for miles in length and we speed along pretty lively. We have recovered from our slight gun scare at Ozyka, and once more settle down to enjoy passing scenes on the lowlands and take in the many features of negro life so often read of but never seen. Contrasting those with home scenes we are

delighted and surprised. Hammond Station.—A lunch counter here, and five minutes allowed. Into it boys, good coffee." From here we pass into the Louisiana swamps, the beautiful drooping cypress and palmetto trees abounding, a really lovely spot. We now strike a lake, of about a mile in width, a charming stretch of water, as far as the eye can see, and just as smooth as a mirror; we cross it, on a strong iron bridge, of two spans, of about 30 feet each; the remainder is built of trestle work. To the right of us is Lake Narrapa, to the left Pontchartrain, from here to New Orleans, a distance of about 70 or 80 miles. We run through a swamp of fearful proportions. It appears the Mississippi has broken through its banks, and overflowed the country; lying, as it does some 50 miles from the railroad, it must have done considerable damage. We await, very impatiently, for the approach to New Orleans and are disappointed very much, as the appearance of the

outskirts of the city is anything but prepossessing; small low huts and negro shanties abound especially around the station of the Chicago, St-Louis and New Orleans Railroad (Jackson Route). We take possession of the only bus at the depot and crowd on starting for our first drive in New Orleans.

Tuesday, December 6, 1881, 3 P. M. —We arrive in the Crescent City, full of hope and expectation, and stop at the side entrance of the St Charles Hotel, whence we proceed up a magnificent stone stairway and find ourselves in the spacious office. After registering, we are soon surrounded by gallant railroad men from every state in the Union, even from the far famed Gold State, California. After exchanging greetings and business cards, we stroll around forming acquaintances, and making ourselves generally agreeable as this class of men are famous the world over for their conviviality and sociability.

Our Canadian delegation are introduced to the worthy president R. A. Brigham B. and O. road and also to E. R. Ganson, the hard working and indefatigable grand secretary-treasurer, who made us welcome to the convention. Having a letter of introduction to John W. Moore, from Ed. Crean, he took a hand in and treated us kindly. At 5 P. M. we were extended an invitation to visit the new steamer "City of New Orleans" one of the Mississippi boats, and just launched. We proceed in a body 70 or 80 strong, including a number of ladies, and are right royally received by Capt. Carter, and his polite clerk. After inspecting the state rooms, numbering about 100, and which are most expensively fitted out, being supplied with complete bed room sets, instead of the old style double berths, with hardly sitting room; each apartment is large and airy. We next visited the pantry and were again delighted with this sight. Some of the party made their way to the

grand piano, where they indulged and interested the company by music and singing; the next move was the refreshments, proposed by Capt. Carter, and gallantly carried by all. A long table in the centre of the grand saloon was loaded with all the delicacies of the season, and I can tell you the boys did it ample justice; many corks were drawn and toasts drank, the principal one being the health of the gallant captain and crew of the beautiful steamer "City of New Orleans" and wishing her success and her owners increased prosperity in their adventure. Our doctor was at home, and the ring of his merry laugh could be heard above the cracking of the wine glasses, he having formed acquaintance with a number of the strangers. After bidding adieu to our kind host, we saunter leisurely back to the hotel, where supper awaited us. In the evening a majority of the party attended the academy of music to witness the performance of the Edgewood folk

by Sol Smith Russell which they admired very much; as who is it that has ever seen this actor could resist the temptation of returning again and again to see him. After the theatre, we return to the hotel. As the reputation of this city at night is anything but good for poor unfortunate Canuck greenhorns to be caught straggling around, we determine to get ourselves to bed, and perhaps, upon better acquaintance we may become more bold, so we retire about 12 P. M.

Wednesday, 7th December, 1882.

1st Day of Convention

We awake this morning feeling rested, after our long journey, and discover that the weather appears to again favor us, and upon opening our windows, a beautiful New Orleans sun bursts into our room, proclaiming a fine day. After usual morning salutation we adjourn to the breakfast

room, where we meet numbers of the Delegates we got acquainted with yesterday and their charming wives: amongst them our Boston friends, Benson, Foster and Royer. At 10 a. m. we assemble and proceed in a body to the Masonic Hall, a few houses distant from the Hotel, and where the Convention sit, which we filled pretty respectably. As the ladies had joined us, it presented quite a lively assembly. The Convention opened with prayer by the Rev. M. Markham, followed by Mayor Shakespeare of New Orleans, in a short and pointed speech, welcoming us to the city, and expressing his great pleasure at seeing so many Conductors in one room, also congratulating the ladies on their appearance and presence at the meeting, winding up by inviting the association to a trip to the west end of Lake Pontchartrain, distant six miles from the city. He also told a little story of his dealings with a Conductor. On his way home from Europe last year, he found upon

being asked payment for his meal at Indianapolis, that he had lost his purse, and could not pay for his meal. The Conductor at once stepped up and arranged, saying that is all right. "Sir, but you don't know me". "No matter, I will find the purse," and true to his word before we came to the end of his run, he handed me my purse, intact. So much for the honesty of the Conductor. This little story was cheered to the echo; then followed a young man whose name I did not catch, in a few well chosen words, winding up with the wish that we would find the southern heart as warm as the southern homes. Next followed the opening address, delivered by ex-president Titus, who gave a sketch of the history of New-Orleans since 1641, very interesting and most attentively listened to; then reviewing the object of this association and its necessity, explaining how the Old Reliable is the grandfather of all branch associations, he imposed upon the ladies the obli-

gation of inducing their husbands joining the association, winding up a very good and most interesting speech, by relating how proud some women are. Once when a lady was asked to pay an assessment, she said: why, with that amount I could get a new bonnet, showing that she thought more of dress than the purest of all virtues charity. We then adjourned, to take in the invitation to Lake Pontchartrain, taking the steam cars starting from Canal street. Seven excursion cars we soon filled by our party, and the train, hauled by a dummy engine, soon brought us to our destination, through innumerable streets and turning curves and corners at a pretty fair speed. We alight at a lovely spot, at the foot of the Lake, artificially filled in. The station is very neat and leads off in all directions to grand palatial restaurants. Bath and summer houses, erected at convenient distance, beautiful shell and wooden walks are romantically laid out for considerable distances up

and across the Lake. The shell walks are most artistically laid out, lined and surrounded by the many exotic plants to be found in this southern country, the rose trees in blooms, young orange and olive trees and vine-covered lattice work. In the centre of this covered work there is formed a regular puzzle; the unwary visitor enters what he fancies to be a cave, formed of rocks, he proceeds, winding through zigzag paths, fenced in by wire fencing clad in vines, until after winding about several times, he presently brings up at a place where the fence joins and no apparent exit; when upon retracing his steps he cannot find the passage, it being hidden by the over-hanging vines, and for a time gets completely puzzled not noticing the sudden abrupt turnings or double passages. Three of our party got into its meshes, and we enjoyed a good laugh at their expense; some of the ladies inquisitive, as ladies usually are, got caught in the meshes of the puzzle, and they had some

little trouble getting disentangled. We had also the extreme pleasure of viewing three live crocodiles, vicious looking animals about eight or ten feet in length; we kept a very respectful distance from those peculiar gentlemen. They have also a magnificent dancing platform and band stand, where upon summer evenings the elite and fashion of New-Orleans come out to enjoy the Lake breezes, listening to the music and of course take a turn at the light fantastic, if so inclined; the whole place being illuminated by the electric light, presenting a grand and imposing spectacle. I did not hear of the cost of building and preparing these grounds, but I presume it must have cost a good round sum; it is under the control and maintained by the Canal Street Railway Company. The return journey to the city is made, without incident or accident; all overjoyed with the grand and imposing sight presented to them in this visit to Lake Pontchartrain. In the

evening, we strolled out to visit this famous southern city; the reputation it had in our minds, from the hard name always given it, we expected when night cast its shadows over it, that we would be innocent spectators of something worth while chronicling, but instead, we strolled about, under the gaslights, as familiar as if we were at home; nothing strange or wonderful happening, meeting the ordinary class of people of both sexes. The stores do not present the same grand appearance as those of the northern cities, being for the most part small low houses. We dropped into a Lager Bier Garten or Variety Hall, consisting of a large room containing the ever present hotel bar on entering; the remainder of the room being furnished with small tables and chairs, each table seating four people; then we have a raised platform, on which are seated a lady orchestra of some sixteen instruments, who furnish some excellent music to the large crowd of all classes seated

around the room. Then to change the monotony we have a solo from the xenophon, or steam organ, a most wonderful instrument, which produces some first class music, by means of steam; all of this is grand and serves to afford us no little amusement but, all things end, so we return once more to the precincts of the St-Charles, to find many others, like ourselves before us; they too having tired for a time of the gaiety of New-Orleans Variety Hall and Concert Saloons.

Thursday, 8th December. — Second day of session. All up early and feeling good, ready to enjoy another day of southern life. At 10 A. M. the meeting was called to order by the President, when he explained the business of the day, which was the election of officers, and the naming of our next place of meeting. Mr. R. P. Brown was elected by acclamation, as our next President, and our freind. Mr. E. Reynolds, was duly installed

by a unanimous vote as 2nd Vice President. He was duly escorted to a seat on the stage, and in a few fitting words, delivered in his usual style, thanked the Boys for the great honor done to Canada through him, and assured them that the Boys up North would appreciate this honor. Milwaukee, was then named as the place for holding the next Convention; then came usual votes of thanks for the many kindnesses extended to us during our stay here; speeches and jokes were the order of the day. Then order was called by the President elect, and a whole host of invitations were extended us and accepted viz a trip to Spanish Fort, on Lake Pontchartrain, on N. O. Railway, at 3 P. M., a visit to the sugar plantations of Mr. Adams, also a trip to Mobile and return over the Louisville and Nashville, a distance of 141 miles, but we could not wait to participate in any of them, as our stay was limited. We were obliged to leave, having many other places to visit

where we wished to stay over, on our way home, so with many feelings of regret we parted from the kind friend, whose acquaintance we had formed during our stay here, being the first convention that many of us had ever attended. We were delighted at the courteous manner in which we were received by our brother conductors and their estimable ladies who were from all over the American Union, some even hailing from the shores of the Pacific Ocean. Rest assured the memory of this trip shall ever remain engraved on the minds of the boys from Canada, and, if the opportunity should ever present itself, they shall never be found wanting to further the interests of the "Old Reliable Insurance Association of the U. S. and Canada" Long may it live and flourish, is the sincere wish of

EUGENE MCKENNA.